(e) to (g) Government has established methods for recognising scientific merit and good work.

Manufacture of Main Battle Tanks by Bharat Earth Movers Ltd.

1756. SHRI RAOOF VALIULLAH :
SHRI BAIKUNTHA NATH SAHU :

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have received proposal from the Bharat Earth Movers Ltd. for manufacture of Main Battle Tanks (MBT), if so, whether it is being considered for approval;

(b) whether the proposal had earlier been submitted by the Bharat Heavy Electrical Ltd. also, if so, what are the constraints for not accepting their proposal; and

(c) whether Government have explored the export potential of MBT, if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE PRODUCTION AND SUPPLIES IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir. The decision regarding manufacture of Main Battle Tank will be taken keeping in view the overall techno-economic aspects of the offers received.

(c) No, Sir, as the tank is under advanced stages of development.

Curtailing the Research Work of Regional Research Laboratory, Bhuvaneswar

1757. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Scientists of the Regional Research Laboratory, Bhuvaneswar have alleged that the research work in the forest, marine and agricultural resources in the laboratory has been curtailed by the management;

(b) if so, what are the main allegations made and to what extent they have been found true; and

(c) what steps are being taken to continue the research work?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, ELECTRONICS AND SPACE (SHRI K. R. NARAYANAN): (a) and (b) A news item had appeared in some newspaper alleging that the research work in forest, marine and agricultural resources in the Regional Research Laboratory, Bhubaneswar had been curtailed and throttled by the management though work had expanded a great deal in the sphere of minerals. The allegations are baseless. Research programmes of laboratories are formulated based on the recommendations of Research Council, Research Council of the Regional Research Laboratory, Bhubaneswar has identified areas of excellence for the laboratory as under :

(i) Mineral beneficiation and agglomeration.

(ii) Extraction of non-ferrous metals.

(iii) Hydraulic transportation of minerals.

(iv) Plasma metallurgy.

The projects other than these are dovetailed to CSIR thrust area programmes or thrust area programme of other nodal laboratories.

(c) Research work in this area is continuing.

Application from Madhya Pradesh for setting up of Electronic Units

1758. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether applications from the Madhya Pradesh Government and the entrepreneurs from that state have been received for establishing manufacturing units